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HISTORIAN

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OF HANCOCK COUNTY

Bay Saint Louis, Mississippi

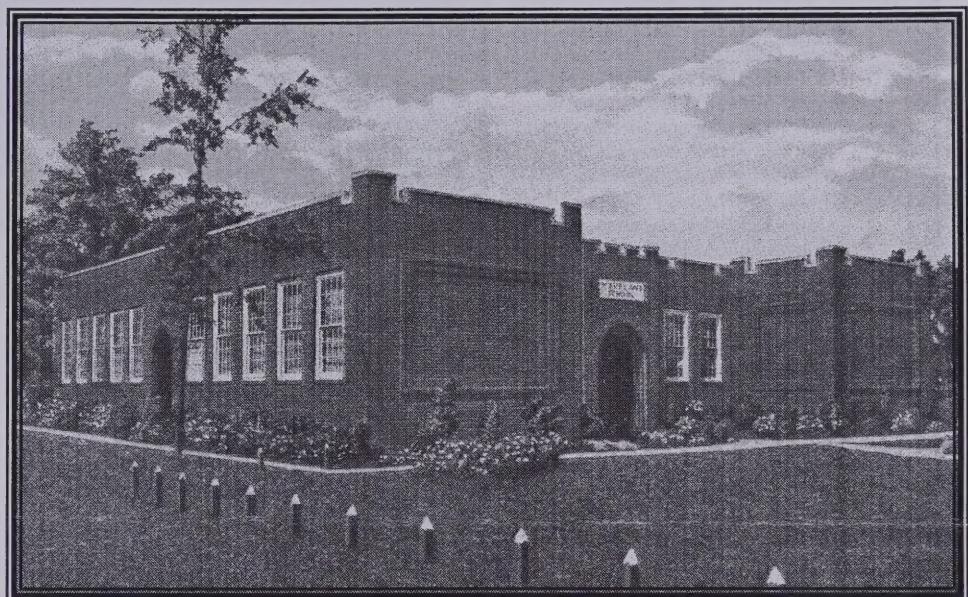
August 2009

COMING EVENTS AT LOBRANO HOUSE

The August luncheon meeting will be held on Thursday, August 20, 2009, at noon at the Kate Lobrano House. The speaker will be Karen Ruhr, Hancock County Circuit Clerk. Mrs. Ruhr will discuss the renovations and restoration of the Hancock County Courthouse. **Reservations are required** and may be made by calling 467-4090. Please call **by noon on Wednesday, August 19**, to make your reservation, to help us plan seating which is limited to forty-five people, and to apprise Michelle of the number for whom to prepare. The price of the lunch is \$8.00.

ANNUAL CEMETERY TOUR

Even though October is still a couple of months away, it's not too early to begin thinking about and planning the Hancock County Historical Society Annual Cemetery Tour. It will be held on Halloween night, Saturday, October 31, 2009, at Cedar Rest Cemetery on Second Street. We will need volunteers to help prepare the cemetery for the tour (mark the path, etc.), to portray citizens buried there, to act as guides, and to serve at the Lobrano House.



Built in 1930, the Old Waveland School (Civic Center) has been restored since Hurricane Katrina

The City of Waveland

By
Eddie Coleman

In an article in the May 4, 1893, *New Orleans Times-Democrat*, a staff correspondent wrote of the city of Waveland:

“Waveland is a suggestive name—suggestive of a land made musical by the swish of waters and by the creamy crush of billows on the beach. [It is] a place where sparkling waters stretch unbroken to the horizon’s edge, and where waves, in never-ending succession, march in long ranks, to roll their slow and slumberous lengths on

the sandy shore.”

He further stressed that much of the development of Waveland was the result of the building of vacation houses by wealthy New Orleanians to escape the stresses of city life and business. In fact, he avowed that all of the towns along the Mississippi Gulf Coast began as nothing more than suburbs of New Orleans.

Although the “Land of the Waves” has been a long established summer retreat and resort for visitors from New Orleans, the first permanent population came from the descendants of the original French and Spanish settlers. It is from these beginnings that the city of today has come.

Steamboats brought the first tourists to Waveland as early as

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Eddie Coleman, Editor
Linda-Lou Nelson, Publisher

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LOBRANO HOUSE HOURS

MONDAY — FRIDAY

10:00AM — 3:00PM

Closed: 12:00—1:00 (lunch)

MISSION STATEMENT

"TO PRESERVE THE GENERAL AND ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY OF HANCOCK COUNTY AND TO PRESERVE THE KATE LOBRANO HOUSE AND COLLECTIONS THEREIN; TO RESEARCH AND INTERPRET LIFE IN HANCOCK COUNTY; AND TO ENCOURAGE AN APPRECIATION OF AND INTEREST IN HISTORICAL PRESERVATION."

1818; however, it wasn't until 1830 that regular service was available. The city is forty-eight miles from New Orleans on the Louisville and Nashville Railroad (CSX), which was begun in 1869 and completed twenty months later. Originally there were two stops in Waveland with one depot at Waveland Avenue and another at Nicholson Avenue. The two depots reinforce the fact that many New Orleans businessmen commuted monthly, weekly, or even daily to their jobs in the Crescent City.

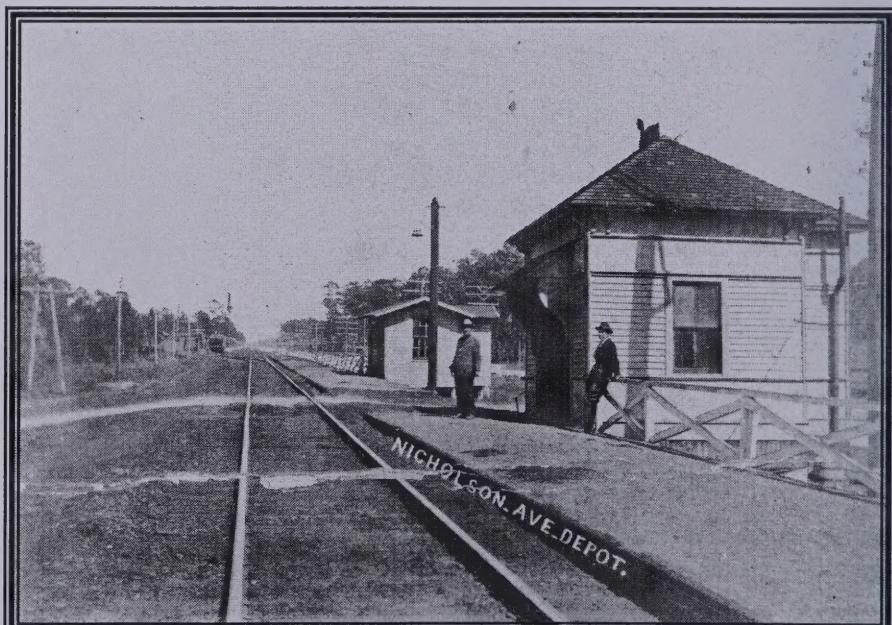
At one time the bulk of the city of Waveland was located on the south side of the railroad tracks because most of the houses were built along the shell beach road to take advantage of the Gulf breezes.

At first Waveland was a part of Shieldsboro (Bay Saint Louis), and an early name of the city was Montgomery Station. A post office was established in October 1875 with Joseph Carrio as the first postmaster. In time, the need arose for the "resort village" to become more, so in March 1888, city fathers applied for a charter to create a separate municipality with L.

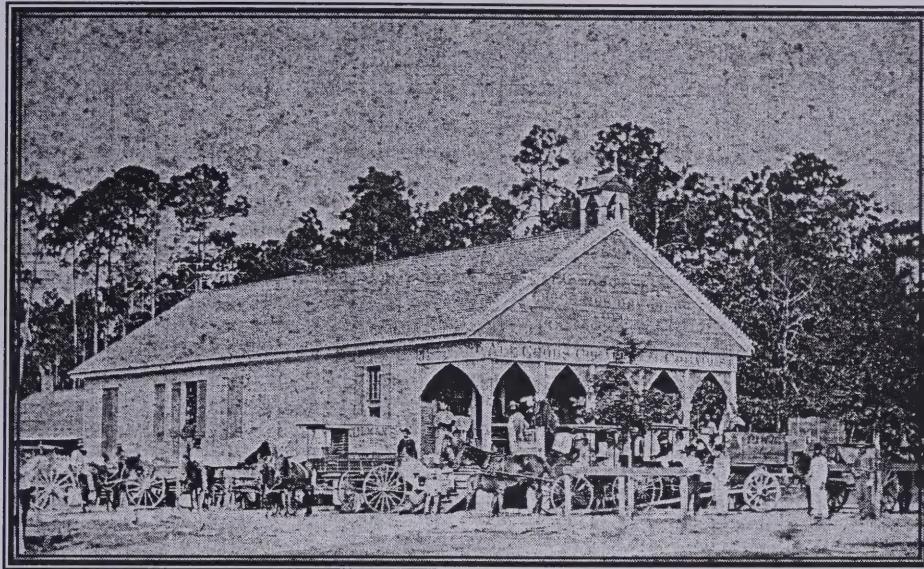
H. Fairchild as its first mayor and Alfred A. Ulman and Olus Bourgeois as the first two aldermen.

Located on Nicholson Avenue, the major business in the 1880's was the Ulman Woolen Mill, which had wool blankets and black and white plaid shawls as its principal products. So successful was the plant that Jeff Davis Avenue was opened to build homes for the mill workers. This community became known as Ulmanville. Other early businesses in the town included a grocery owned by Fortune O. Kroll, Sr., and located near the Waveland Avenue depot and a general merchandise store on Nicholson Avenue owned by J. B. Ulman. Later businesses were the Nicholson Avenue Theatre, which opened in 1921, another theater, which opened in 1925, and the Gulf Cinema, operated by Ed Ortte and opened in 1937.

In the early to mid-1950's visitors were entertained with gala street dances, barn dances at the town hall, and games of the Waveland baseball team, which was named the Sentinels (later the Green Sox). In 1945 the municipal pier opened at the foot of Coleman



One of two depots in Waveland, the Nicholson Ave. Depot served the Ulman Mills.



The Ulman Commissary was located near the Ulman Mills on Nicholson Ave.

Avenue.

There were several notable houses, buildings, church camps, etc., located in Waveland and its surrounding area. Among these were Holy Cross Boys Camp on South Beach Blvd. (1908), the Dielmann Evangelical Center (1927—193), and Gulfside Assembly (1925). Some were lost to Hurricanes Camille and Katrina, and others were lost to fire or for other reasons. The one which has survived is the recently renovated Waveland School, built in 1930.

One interesting business was Brown's Vineyard, which was established in 1872 by Fred W. Brown of Germany and was known for its champagnes and scuppernong wine. A beautiful orchard and colony of alligators added color to the oldest and largest vineyard on the Coast. It was located in the vicinity of Lil' Rays on Highway 90.

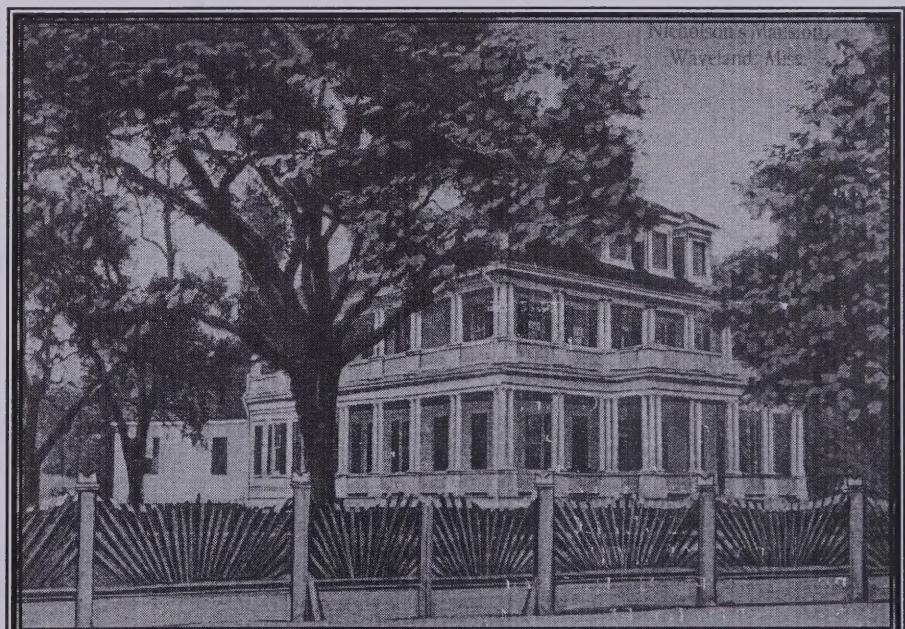
Probably the house which has the most legends and tales surrounding it is known as "The Pirate House." Built in 1802, it was also known as the Blake House, and a great deal of mystery has surrounded its building and owner.

Since its early years the house has passed through many hands, and the story goes that it was once the home of a New Orleans businessman. Supposedly, he was overlord of a band of coast pirates who gave aid to Andrew Jackson in the defense of New Orleans in the War of 1812. It was this man to whom credit is given for organizing the pirate band

which was composed of such colorful characters as Pierre and Jean Lafitte. Unfortunately, the name of this man is unknown. [Editors note: a forthcoming article in the September issue of *The Historian* will discuss the possible original owner.] One legend even refers to him as Jean Lafitte himself. However, no documentation has been found to substantiate this supposition. One legend surrounding the house is that a secret tunnel once led from the house to the waterfront. What has been discovered to uphold this belief is that some older citizens of Waveland recall having been in this underground area as children.

Another famous house on North Beach Boulevard in Waveland was "Fort Nicholson," the home of Eliza Poitevent Nicholson. At the death of her husband in the late 1800's, Mrs. Nicholson became the editor and proprietor of the New Orleans *Daily Picayune*. In addition to these duties Mrs. Nicholson was the accomplished author of a book of poetry, *Lyrics*, using the pseudonym "Pearl Rivers."

Even though Waveland was



The home of Eliza Poitevent Nicholson at 615 North Beach Blvd., Waveland, MS, was known as "Fort Nicholson." Partially destroyed by fire, it was renovated, but was completely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina.

heavily damaged by Hurricane Camille, it was almost completely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Nonetheless, it has come through the damage, and houses and businesses are once again beginning to return and prosper in this "lovely village on the Mississippi Sound."

SOURCES:

Back, Edith. "Waveland." *The Historian*, Sept. 2000, pp. 1-2,
 Brieger, James F. *Hometown Mississippi*. Privately published.
 Vertical file, Hancock County Historical Society.

Students Shine at National History Day Competition

By
 Renee McClendon

Area students, each having won their individual divisions at the State History Day Contest at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg earlier this year, traveled

to the University of Maryland at College Park to test their research and presentation projects against those of other state winners during the week of June 14-18, 2009. These six students were accompanied and supported by dozens of family members from the Hancock County area.

Although none of the Mississippi students placed high enough in their first level of national competition to participate in the final round, they finished near the middle of their categories, a great accomplishment for Mississippi History Day!

Eighth grader Leila Sabbagh won a special award: 'Best of State - Jr. Division,' with her documentary entitled, "Between Midnight and Day: The Son House Legacy." A project highlight for Leila was traveling to the University of Mississippi and the Mississippi Delta for research on this infamous bluesman.

The students and their families enjoyed touring the Washington, D.C. area, and trading state buttons with thousands of other

students representing every state in the U.S., as well as Guam, American Samoa, and Department of Defense Schools.

BOOKS FOR SALE AT LOBRANO HOUSE

Bay Saint Louis: Celebrating the First 300 Years
 By the HCHS (\$15.00)

A nostalgic keepsake of the city's history including descriptions and pictures of many of the historic buildings and houses especially those along Beach Boulevard prior to Katrina

Blueberry Peaches, Red Robin Pie
 By Stella LaViolette and Paul Estronza La Violette (\$25.00)
 An annotated cookbook of Gulf Coast recipes

Heritage Cookbook
 By the HCHS (\$15.00)
 A collection of our members' favorite family recipes

Holly
 By Paul La Violette (\$20.00)
 An intriguing anthology of tales of a tomcat living in a beach house on the Gulf Coast

Katrina Cookbook
 By Charlet Russell (\$19.95)
 A collection of recipes by Bayou Tours

One Dog, Two Dogs, Three Dogs, Four...
 By Paul La Violette (\$20.00)
 Twice told tales of several dogs living in a beach house on the Gulf Coast

Scrapbook of Treasured Memories
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 A book of art, photography, and reminiscence of the Gulf Coast

Sink or Be Sunk
 By Paul La Violette (\$30.00)
 A recounting of the naval battle in the Mississippi Sound preceding the Battle of New Orleans in 1812

West Side Stories
Before, During, and After on Mississippi's West Coast

Photographs and Commentary by Vicki Niolet and Betty Stechmann (\$28.00)
 A Pictorial of our homes and communities in Pass Christian, Bay st. Louis, Waveland, Lakeshore, and Clermont Harbor

A White Egret in the Shallows
 By Paul La Violette (\$20.00)
 "His stories reveal the ambiance and wonder of coastal living, while at the same time showing the sometimes slow, sometimes catastrophic physical and social changes taking place in the coastal regions."

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National History Day Competitors and Coach

L to R—Coach Renee McClendon, Leila Sabbagh, Elizabeth Vogel, Brendan Ryan, Eric Sommer, Hayden Sherick, Joseph Sommer



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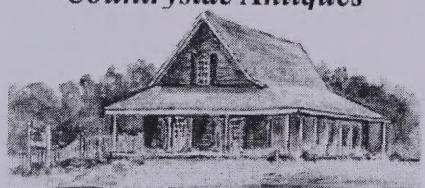
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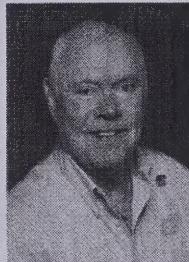
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